Spectrum to cellular operators

3572. SHRI JAYANTA BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether cellular operators have been given spectrum in advance for planning their network;

(b) whether the CDMA operators have been denied this facility and given only 2.5 MHz with no guarantee of spectrum to be given ahead; and

(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take to provide level playing field to all the operators?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) Yes, Sir. Spectrum has been earmarked for cellular operations, as per their Service License Agreement, and frequencies are assigned considering the requirement of cellular operators in a service area.

(b) and (c) As per their Service License Agreement, Basic Telephone Service Providers are permitted spectrum for CDMA based WLL (Wireless in Local Loop) service in the frequency band 824-844 MHz paired with 869-889 MHz, to be earmarked on first come first served basis. Spectrum upto 5 + 5 MHz can be earmarked to each Basic Telephone Service Provider based on their requirements. Coordination of requirements may be necessary to protect existing users. Basic Telephone Service Providers, on installing the Point of Presence in a SDCA (Short Distance Charging Area), become eligible for spectrum upto 2.5 + 2.5 MHz in that SDCA. Further earmarking of spectrum is subject to their fulfilling the roll out obligations, as stipulated in the License Agreement and availability of spectrum.

Irregularities in allotment of coin boxes in Karnataka

3573. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the irregularities in allotment of coin boxes of PCO lines in Karnataka;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to ensure fair allotment of these coin boxes of PCO lines in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) No irregularity in allotment of coin boxes has been noticed in Karnataka.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

Media Lab Asia

3574. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the activities of the Media Lab Asia;

(b) the details of the corporates and others, sponsoring the Media Lab Asia; and

(c) Government's funding in the Media Lab Asia during the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR) : (a) Media Lab Asia is a network of R&D laboratories to conduct research in the following areas :—

— Development of low-cost computing devices.

— Providing rural connectivity.

— Development of low-cost instrumentation and fabrication facilities.

— Integration of these concepts into a digital village framework.

(b) M/s. Tata Sons through Tata Consultancy Services have agreed to be the corporate sponsor for the Media Lab Asia.

(c) Media Lab Asia project was initiated in the year 2001-02 and the funds released by Government of India during that year was Rs. 65 crores.